

Remarks:

Claim 29 has been amended and claims 30 and 31 have been newly presented. Therefore, claims 28 through 31 are presently before the Examiner for consideration. Entry of the amendment is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that new claims 30 and 31 are identical to claims 1 and 2, respectively, of U.S. Patent No. 6,768,820 to Yakhini et al. ("Yakhini"), issued July 27, 2004. Concurrently filed herewith is the Response to Office Action Dated December 9, 2004, And Request for Declaration of Interference with a Patent under 37 CFR § 41.202 – Expedited Handling, in which Applicants request an interference between the present application and United States Patent Nos. 6,591,196 and 6,768,820.

Applicants note that the specification has been amended to add subject matter which was incorporated by reference to U.S. Patent No. 5,143,854 (Pirrung et al.) at pages 1 and 6 of the specification at the time of filing. Applicants note that the subject matter was contained at column 3, lines 39-54 of U.S. Patent No. 5,143,854. Accordingly, Applicants submit that such changes do not contain impermissible new matter due to the incorporation by reference as originally filed.

Applicants further note that the specification has been amended to include missing words in the paragraph bridging pages 12 and 13 of the specification.

Entry and consideration of the foregoing is respectfully requested.

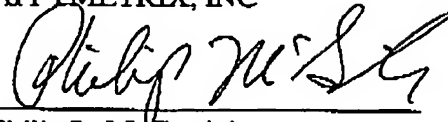
No new fees are believed to be due with the filing of this document. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 01-0431.

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